United Nations A/C.1/59/PV.15

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Official Records

First Committee
15th meeting
Friday, 22 October 2004, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 4.10 p.m.

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions under agenda items 56 to 72

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.5.

Mr. Sanders (Netherlands): I wish to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.5, entitled "National legislation on transfer of arms, military equipment and dual-use goods and technology", under the cluster of "Other disarmament measures and disarmament machinery". I think that is the appropriate cluster.

I will be brief. This is the fourth year that this draft resolution has been introduced for consideration by the First Committee. In the past two years, it has been adopted by consensus.

The draft resolution is straightforward. It establishes norms and invites Member States that are in a position to do so to improve their national legislation, regulations and procedures to exercise effective control over the transfer of arms, military equipment and dual-use goods and technology.

There are two small changes as compared to last year's resolution. First, we have inserted in operative paragraph 1 the phrase "without prejudice to the provisions contained in Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)" because, obviously, last year that resolution did not exist and this year it does, and that resolution also contains provisions related to this particular issue. This draft resolution will not affect that Security Council resolution, which goes without saying, but we felt that we needed to refer to that here.

The second small change is in the last operative paragraph, which normally puts this matter on the agenda of a subsequent session of the General Assembly. We decided in this case not to be too specific and to remain open to possibly biannualizing or triennializing this draft resolution, and that is why we said, "decides to remain attentive to the matter", which seemed to us to be an elegant formula to show flexibility as to the periodicity of this draft resolution.

I hope that once again the First Committee will adopt this draft resolution by consensus.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.55/Rev.1.

Mr. Dzundev (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): I have the honour, on behalf of its sponsors, to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.55/Rev.1 on "Maintenance of international security — good-neighbourliness, stability and development in South-Eastern Europe", under agenda item 58.

In addition to the sponsors mentioned in A/C.1/59/L.55/Rev.1, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, San Marino, the Slovak

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Republic, Serbia and Montenegro, Turkey and the United Kingdom are also sponsors of the draft.

This draft resolution is a follow-up to resolution 57/52 and several others on the subject. It addresses the complexity of the issues of security, disarmament, stability and cooperation and reflects developments in the region in the recent period. The thrust of the draft resolution is further to promote a culture of good-neighbourliness, cooperation, stability and integration in order to enhance overall development and further stability in the region.

The region of South-Eastern Europe has recently undergone many positive changes. The most encouraging ones include the further intensification of cooperation among the countries of the region and their continued rapprochement with the European Union, which favourably influenced the overall situation in the region. The countries are making further efforts to consolidate the region as a region of peace, security, stability, democracy and the rule of law, as well as of economic development.

In the recent period, we also note the strengthening of regional and national efforts on arms control, demining and disarmament, including initiatives on combating the illicit trade in small arms and activities at the national level for their collection and destruction.

The United Nations, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the European Union, NATO, the Stability Pact and other regional organizations or initiatives, primarily the South-East Cooperation Process, have contributed to this positive climate. However, further efforts are needed to deal with the remaining challenges in order to achieve lasting security and stability in the region.

Regional and national responses are still needed to fight extremism and to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, which is a destabilizing factor closely connected with various forms of organized crime and other issues of concern.

It is the belief of the sponsors that the text of draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.55/Rev.1 is balanced and forward-looking. Its primary goal is to identify measures and efforts leading to the further stabilization of South-Eastern Europe and to the elimination of threats to its security.

In that context, it must be underlined that the primary responsibility for the future of the region rests with the States themselves, but also that international organizations have a significant role to play. Of no less importance is the full observance of the relevant international instruments.

Regarding the text itself, changes have already been made to A/C.1/59/L.55/Rev.1. The Secretariat has just informed me that the text of operative paragraph 10, as it appears in the draft, has been changed as previously submitted to the Secretariat.

In conclusion, I would like to express gratitude to the delegations that contributed improvements to the text, and it is my wish and that of the sponsors that, as has been the case in the past, this draft resolution be adopted without a vote.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of Mongolia to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.19.

Mr. Baatar (Mongolia): I have the honour to introduce a draft biennial resolution entitled "Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status", contained in document A/C.1/59/L.19. I ask your indulgence, as this draft resolution is under the cluster "Nuclear disarmament", not "Regional disarmament", which we are discussing today.

Steady progress has been made in consolidating Mongolia's international security since the adoption of the last General Assembly resolution under the same title, resolution 57/67. The Government of Mongolia has taken numerous actions based on its open, multi-pillar and proactive foreign policy towards that end. There have been welcome developments in political, economic and cultural bilateral relations with countries in the region and all over the world. Relations with many countries have reached the level of partnerships, including with the People's Republic of China, India, Japan, Russia and, most recently, with the United States of America.

The nuclear-weapon-free status of Mongolia — an important aspect of the country's international security and foreign policy, as well as its contribution to strengthening peace and stability in the region and beyond — has continued to receive solid support from the international community. It was supported in a number of bilateral documents adopted at high and the

highest levels, for example, in the Mongolian and Chinese joint statement issued in June 2003 on the outcome of the State visit to Mongolia by the President of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Hu Jintao, as well as in the thirteenth Non-Aligned Summit, in Kuala Lumpur in 2003.

During the general debate, by delegation dwelt at length on the actions that my Government intends to take with regard to its nuclear-weapon-free status. I would therefore like to comment on developments in non-nuclear areas, namely, the economic and ecological vulnerability of the country. Two studies — on economic vulnerabilities and human security in Mongolia, and on ecological vulnerabilities and human security in Mongolia — were undertaken and have produced a set of conclusions, recommendations and messages for the future. The Government of Mongolia, as well as other national stakeholders, will consider them thoroughly. A very good update on the progress made can be found in the Secretary-General's report in document A/59/364.

I take this opportunity to express, on behalf of the Government of Mongolia, our sincere gratitude to Secretary-General Kofi Annan and, through him, to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific for their continued assistance and support in the implementation of resolution 57/67.

I would emphasize that the draft resolution before the Committee is essentially a procedural one and includes some technical updates. It takes note of the report of the Secretary-General and expresses appreciation to him for his efforts to implement resolution 57/67. As did the previous resolution, it endorses and supports Mongolia's good-neighbourly relations with its neighbours and invites Member States to continue to cooperate with Mongolia on the implementation of the provisions of the resolution.

Please also note that my delegation has made some amendments to the text, upon close consultations with the concerned parties.

New language was introduced to operative paragraph 2, which now reads:

"Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for the efforts to implement resolution 57/67, in particular the completion of the two studies on the non-nuclear aspects of Mongolia's international security;".

The revised operative paragraph 5 will now read as follows:

"Invites Member States to continue to cooperate with Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen Mongolia's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, the inviolability of its borders, its independent foreign policy, its economic security and its ecological balance, as well as its nuclear-weapon-free status;".

The draft resolution, though procedural, has been the subject of very careful examination by interested delegations, and thus it enjoys wide support. My delegation, therefore, hopes that the Committee will agree, as before, to adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

Mr. Obiang (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is my honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.3, entitled "Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa", on behalf of sponsors Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, the Congo, Gabon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and my own country, Equatorial Guinea.

Among other purposes, this draft resolution seeks to promote confidence-building measures at the regional and subregional levels with a view to eliminating tensions and conflicts in Central Africa and to promote peace, stability and development in the subregion. It also highlights the need to put into operation the early-warning mechanism in the subregion as an instrument for analysing and monitoring the situation in member States of the Standing Advisory Committee with a view to preventing the outbreak of future armed conflicts and thus to prevent situations such as that which would have developed in my country in March last year, had the attempted invasion by mercenaries succeeded.

I hope that this draft resolution will be approved without a vote.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.24.

Mr. Udedibia (Nigeria): On behalf of the African Group, I wish to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.24, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa".

Allow me first to make a minor revision to the draft resolution. In the last preambular paragraph, "Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution" should be replaced by "Peace and Security Council". The paragraph thus begins: "Taking into account the need to establish close cooperation between the Regional Centre and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union ...". The replacement should simply be "Peace and Security Council" for "Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution".

We have heard today a first-hand report on the situation of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa. You are correct in your conclusion, Mr. Chairman, that the situation of the Regional Centre is very critical.

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa has continued to carry out activities in support of the efforts of African States in the areas of peace and security. The draft resolution considers the important role that the Regional Centre can play in promoting confidence-building and arms limitation measures at the regional level. It highlights the fact that the Centre had received an increasing number of requests from Member States in the African region for substantive support for several peace initiatives and conflict resolution activities in the region.

The Secretary-General's report on the Centre indicates that it continued to promote the implementation of multilateral legal instruments in the area of disarmament and of the Programme of Action of the 2001 United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The Centre also continued to consolidate working relations with the African Union, regional and subregional organizations and civil society in the field of peace, disarmament and security in Africa.

As highlighted in the Secretary-General's report, about 80 per cent of the required financial resources for the functioning of the Centre should be derived from voluntary contributions. Unfortunately, donors have not been forthcoming in contributions in recent times, with the result that the Centre had a balance of a mere $2,608 as at 30 June 2004 to cover its operational costs. As a consequence, the possibility of temporarily suspending its activities or relocating its operation in Lomé was raised in the report. In view of the Centre's precarious financial situation, the draft resolution appeals to States, international governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and foundations to make voluntary contributions to strengthen the programmes and activities of the Regional Centre.

The draft resolution reaffirms the strong support for the Regional Centre and emphasizes the need to provide it with the necessary resources to enable it to strengthen its activities and carry out its programmes. It requests the Secretary-General to continue to provide the necessary support to the Centre for better achievements and results. It also requests him to facilitate close cooperation between the Regional Centre and the African Union, in particular in the area of peace, security and development, and to continue to assist the Director of the Regional Centre in his efforts to stabilize the financial situation of the Centre. Finally, it appeals to the Regional Centre, in cooperation with the African Union, regional and sub-regional organizations and the African States, to take steps to promote the consistent implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

In terms of substance and objectives, the draft resolution is the same as that submitted by the African Group at the fifty-eighth session.

The draft resolution has always been adopted without a vote, both in the First Committee and in the General Assembly. As the sponsors of the draft resolution, the African Group is expressing the wish that the resolution be adopted without a vote. I wish, therefore, on behalf of the Group, to appeal for the support of all Member States in adopting the draft resolution without a vote at this session.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Georgia to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.42.

Mr. Adamia (Georgia): As the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission at its 2004 session, and on behalf of the sponsors — who traditionally are members of the expanded Bureau of the Commission — it is my distinct pleasure to introduce

draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.42, entitled, "Report of the Disarmament Commission".

The draft is the result of open-ended informal consultations among members of the Disarmament Commission. It has been prepared in a manner similar to that of previous resolutions regarding the Disarmament Commission, with only certain appropriate changes in the text, as circumstances warrant.

On the basis of our consultations, the Bureau has decided to propose to the Committee non-traditional dates for the Disarmament Commission next year: 18 July to 5 August. Those dates take into consideration the Review Conference on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which will be held early next year. The rest of the resolution is unchanged.

Allow me to say a few words concerning our work during the Commission's 2004 substantive session. The Disarmament Commission concluded its 2004 substantive session without reaching a consensus on a substantive agenda. Differences between various proposals proved to be irreconcilable during the three-week session. While that is not an encouraging sign for the disarmament efforts undertaken within the United Nations system, it is not a disaster, either, since the Commission's difficulties are more political than institutional.

The Disarmament Conference has been going through the phase of asserting its identity as the only multilateral body with universal membership for in-depth deliberations on disarmament issues. The Commission did not hold a session in 2002. It was also unable to reach a consensus in 2003 on the nuclear and conventional arms items on its agenda.

This year, delegations came close to accepting the Chairman's compromise on the nuclear issue, but they could not fill the remaining gap. The same was true with the third item proposed by the United States, on measures for improving the effectiveness of the United Nations disarmament machinery. It is, of course, a disappointment to all of us that at the end it was not possible to overcome a few remaining obstacles. However, despite the inability of the Commission to reach a consensus, many interesting proposals were made during our deliberations. I hope they will serve as a good basis for consensus-building during the 2005 substantive session.

And one more observation — I think that the inability of the Disarmament Commission to yield tangible results has contributed to a heightened sense of urgency on the part of the international community to react and respond adequately to emerging threats to global peace and security by fully utilizing United Nations disarmament machinery in general, and the Disarmament Commission in particular. I hope that the overall atmosphere of expectation will positively influence the work of the Commission in 2005. I believe I speak on behalf of all delegations when I express this guarded optimism as to the future success of the Commission.

Before concluding my brief remarks, allow me to thank delegations for their cooperation and constructive spirit, and members of the Bureau for their support. Let me also remind delegations that the Commission's organizational session will be held on 4 November, and the regional groups are kindly reminded to nominate their candidates for the Bureau as soon as possible.

I hope that draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.42 will again enjoy consensus support, as in previous years.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Georgia for the information he has given us about the organizational meeting of the Disarmament Commission. I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.2/Rev.1.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation is tabling for the consideration of the First Committee draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.2/Rev.1 under agenda item 60, "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security". We would like to thank all those States who supported the Russian initiative on international information security, which has been embodied in this resolution, which in recent years has traditionally been adopted by consensus in the General Assembly. This attests to the broad recognition of the importance of this subject at the international level and to the world community's unity in approaches to the tasks involved in this kind of work.

The report of the Secretary-General entitled "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security", contained in document A/59/116 and Add.1,

sets forth a range of new national views and assessments that are an important addition to the views and assessments that were submitted by Member States earlier. The matter of the potential use for purposes inconsistent with the objectives of maintaining international stability of information and telecommunications technologies and means on which the infrastructures of States are increasingly dependent has a direct bearing on ensuring the military and political security of countries worldwide. Information security is a substantial element of national security of States, and is also a portion of the overall system of international security and strategic stability.

Recent developments, above all the escalation of international terrorism, reaffirm yet again the fact that threats to information security are cross-border in nature. What is more, aggression can be carried out with the hostile use of modern information and communications technologies.

It is important to approach the problem holistically, recognizing that, as noted in the draft resolution, information technologies and means may adversely affect the integrity of the infrastructure of States, to the detriment of their security in both the civil and military fields. In this context, one key task is the protection of computer networks.

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 58/32, in 2004 a United Nations group of governmental experts was established to investigate this subject in all its aspects. The group's first meeting, which took place in July of this year, reaffirmed the relevance and multidimensional nature of international information security and the need for and usefulness of comprehensively studying it. The results of the studies by this group of governmental experts, which is the first of its kind, will provide the basis for a report of the Secretary-General. They are to become the departure point for further work on strengthening information security at the national, regional and international levels. In 2005, the group's work will be continue. We believe it is important to reaffirm the overall thrust and the specific tasks involved in its activities.

At this General Assembly session, the Russian Federation is tabling a new draft resolution on information security. The text contains no fundamental changes, compared to the consensus resolution of the Assembly's fifty-eighth session, and differs from it only stylistically. At the concluding stage of work, by interacting with a number of delegations — and we express our gratitude to them — we made a number of minor technical adjustments to the text in order to reflect more accurately the current stage of the work of group on this subject matter.

We call upon delegations to support the draft resolution of the Russian Federation, and we anticipate that, as in previous years, it will be adopted without a vote, by consensus.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of India to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.32.

Mr. Verma (India): I have the honour to introduce a draft resolution entitled " Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament", contained in document A/C.1/59/L.32 and sponsored by Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Congo, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Fiji, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Viet Nam, Zambia and India.

India first brought this resolution before the First Committee in 1989.

Significant recent advances in information technology, advanced materials and biotechnology and space applications offer vast possibilities for socio-economic development. Access to those technologies is undoubtedly a crucial prerequisite for developing countries. This fact has been recognized by various arms control and disarmament conventions.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) — the first multilateral disarmament agreement of a universal character eliminating a complete class of weapons of mass destruction — offered an opportunity to put in place a multilaterally negotiated, non-discriminatory and legal mechanism that would address proliferation concerns about transfers, while promoting the economic interests of States parties. The sponsors of the present draft resolution want to make the CWC a model for other, future organizations.

India has recognized the dual-use character of many of the advances in science and technology. The potential for their use for both civilian and military

applications is a legitimate cause of concern. However, discriminatory regimes deny access to these crucial technologies to the developing countries, even for peaceful development purposes. Exclusivist export control policies were initiated at a time when there were no global agreements that comprehensively addressed proliferation concerns. Recent events question the effectiveness of such ad hoc arrangements in achieving their stated purpose.

India has consistently maintained that multilaterally negotiated and non-discriminatory agreements that are transparent and open to universal participation would be the best way to address proliferation concerns. The Final Document of the Non-Aligned Movement's Kuala Lumpur Summit, adopted in February last year, has also supported this approach.

There is a need today, more than ever before, to agree on an effective and transparent system of control over export of technologies and materials that would achieve the objectives of non-proliferation in all its aspects while ensuring access to those technologies for peaceful applications. Draft resolution L.32 hopes to encourage and support such a process. India, along with the other sponsors, hopes that this draft resolution will receive the widest possible support.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of the United States, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.1.

Mr. Luages (United States of America): Our delegation takes the floor, under the sub-cluster on disarmament machinery, to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.1, entitled "Improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the First Committee". Both the subject and the draft text enjoy a wide level of support, as we believe we all have seen during the past weeks, and we believe that the draft resolution will be adopted if it were to be brought to a vote.

However, we wish to call the attention of delegations to the possibility that it will not be brought to a vote, and that is because, as most delegates now know, the United States delegation and the delegation of Indonesia, representing the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries have been involved in a series of consultations, with the possibility of merging the texts of draft resolution L.1 and draft resolution L.13 of the same title, introduced by Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. To date those consultations have been constructive, and they are proceeding. As a matter of transparency, we share with delegates that our two delegations conducted another consultation on this today.

In fact, for the information of those delegates who were not present yesterday afternoon, the delegation of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, chaired an open-ended consultation on L.13 at which the United States delegation, in consultation with the delegation of Indonesia, circulated a draft document that proposes to merge elements of L.1, L.13 and a series of recommendations or proposals submitted to us by the European Union. That document is already in informal circulation. We may or may not have copies available here; I do not really know. But we certainly would be in a position to make them available at the next round of consultations, which are scheduled to be held on Monday — our supposed day off — in order to pursue a consensual text dealing with the revitalization of the Committee in accordance with resolution 58/316.

We would point out that at yesterday's meeting, our delegation proposed that henceforth all consultations be open-ended, to permit the participation of all interested delegations, and that perhaps the document on which the United States and Indonesia have been working might serve as an acceptable working document.

To that end, yesterday our delegation submitted to the delegation of Indonesia and the delegation of the Netherlands, in its capacity as the current President of the European Union, a working draft incorporating all three elements, removing any reference to it being a potential revision of the United States-sponsored draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.1 and containing a change in the draft's operative paragraph 13, which makes clear that the recommendations made by the First Committee would not in fact be final. Rather, in concurrence with the guidance given to all the Main Committees by the General Assembly through resolution 58/316, the First Committee it would submit a series of consensualized recommendations to the General Committee for consideration and possible recommendation to the plenary, for action by 1 April.

We are looking forward to continuing the open-ended consultations, which so far have been done in a constructive, consensual atmosphere. We simply call to everyone's attention that it would be our hope that, if

we all arrive at an agreement on a consensualized text, perhaps there might not be any need to bring forward either L.1 or L.13.

Obviously, right now, the working draft looks like a resolution, but the end product may well not be. Once there is agreement on the substance of the text, delegations would have to turn their attention — in consultation with the Chair, in our view — to what would be the best method to convey our collective views on improving the methods of work of the First Committee to the General Committee for its consideration.

We continue to consider it important that whatever action the General Committee takes with regard to anything that could affect the future operation of the First Committee should, to the extent possible, remain in our collective hands. That is to say that, obviously, the ladies and gentlemen who have the honour to represent our respective Governments in the General Committee, should not by and large, be expected to have an expert level of knowledge of the very technical issues with which we deal, or to be familiar with the particular institutional character of the First Committee, as compared to the other Main Committees.

Therefore, we feel very strongly that the only way the General Committee could make informed decisions that might affect our future operation, as those who sit here representing our Governments, is if they work on a set of recommendations produced by us — the experts in the field of the subjects with which we deal in the First Committee — in a consensualized manner and referred to the General Committee under resolution 58/316.

We intend to continue our consultations, now expanded, with all delegations in an open-ended and transparent manner, in the hope that within the next few working days, all of us shall be able to agree on the substance of the document and be able to turn our attention to assisting the Chairman to determine the best way to communicate our collective views on this important issue to the General Assembly through the General Committee.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): As I have already mentioned, I intend the Committee to take up this matter on Monday. It is my hope that at that time, the delegations that support the text in A/C.1/59/L.13, the delegations of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the United States delegation will have more information on progress made in their consultations.

But for now, we shall continue to introduce draft resolutions. I give the floor to the delegation of Argentina to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.52.

Ms. Mar[illegible]le (Argentina): It is my honour to introduce, on behalf of 90 delegations, draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.52, "Information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms". The draft's sponsors are listed on page one of L.52 and in the information note just distributed by the Secretariat. Two delegations have been added to the list.

The Argentinean initiative to introduce this draft resolution is part of the framework of our efforts to resume the dialogue on this issue that took place at the 2000, 2001 and 2003 substantive sessions of the Disarmament Commission. Those occasions highlighted the fact that important developments were taking place in the area of confidence-building measures in various regions around the world, but that delegations lacked information on them.

The objective of the present draft resolution is to enhance information on the latest developments. The draft resolution is not prescriptive; rather, it encourages only the voluntary provision of information on confidence-building measures. Thus its operative paragraphs 1 and 2 welcome and encourage all measures in that respect. Operative paragraph 3 is aimed at follow-up between one General Assembly session and the next. That is linked to the idea Argentina presented in the framework of enhancing the work of the First Committee. The idea was then to have informal meetings every two or three months so that delegations who so desire could describe their experience and the developments that have taken place.

Operative paragraph 4 makes up for what would be the recommendations of the Disarmament Commission when it considered this matter, that is, requesting the Secretary-General to establish an electronic database containing information provided voluntarily by Member States and to assist them, at their request, to organize workshops, seminars, etc. Those activities would be carried out with the financial support of States that are in a position to provide it, and thus there would be no impact on the regular budget of the Organization.

Argentina would again like to express its thanks for the support it has received in this regard and hopes that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of India to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.31.

Mr. Prasad (India): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution on "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction" contained in document A/C.1/59/L.31 and co-sponsored by Afghanistan, Armenia, Bhutan, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Fiji, France, Mauritius, Namibia, Nepal, Poland and Sri Lanka.

The resolution, first adopted in 2002, continued to command consensus support in 2003 within both the First Committee and the General Assembly. It gives expression to shared concerns of the international community and calls upon Member States to take measures aimed at preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. It emphasizes that the international response to the threat needs to be inclusive, multilateral and global. That approach has been widely endorsed, by the Non-Aligned Movement, the G-8, the European Union and most other regional organizations.

The resolution this year includes some technical updates. In particular, it takes note, in a new fourth preambular paragraph, of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The resolution placed before the First Committee has continuing relevance as an unambiguous statement from a body that is universal and democratic. The representative character of the General Assembly validates and reinforces the commitments that we assume as Member States in this regard.

I appeal to delegations of the First Committee to extend to this initiative an even wider measure of support than in the previous two years, through additional co-sponsorship of draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.31. That will demonstrate a larger measure of involvement of the wider United Nations membership on this vital issue.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Mexico to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/59/L.51 and L.18.

Ms. García-Guerra (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for my delegation to present two draft resolutions under agenda item 66, entitled "Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly", which session, held in 1982, was the second special session devoted to disarmament.

As to draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.51, entitled "United Nations Disarmament Information Programme", it is important to highlight that also in 1982, Alva Myrdal of Sweden and Alfonso García Robles of Mexico were recognized for their efforts in promoting the World Disarmament Campaign and were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

With this precedent, affirmed in the preamble of the draft resolution, on behalf of the delegations of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Indonesia, Liberia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines and South Africa, the Mexican delegation hopes that it can count on unanimous support for the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme as a means of dissemination and in order that all the peoples we represent can thus have better access to the content of our deliberations.

Under the same agenda item, the Committee is called on to examine the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, contained in document A/59/157. That report describes the current and future activities of the Centre. We already had an opportunity, in the informal dialogue, to exchange information on the activities of the Centres. For the Group of Latin America and Caribbean States, unanimous support for draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.18 would mean recognition of the importance of the work of the Regional Centre as an agency to help the countries of the region make progress towards peace, disarmament and development.

Ms. Pollack (Canada): I would like to introduce resolution A/C.1/59/L.33, entitled "Verification in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in the field of verification". Members will recall that last year, in the spirit of rationalizing our working methods, Canada did not introduce what had been a biennial resolution, but utilized instead a decision, 58/515, and encouraged an exchange of views on this important

issue during the thematic debate, as is occurring again this year. At the current session, we held two open-ended consultation meetings on the topic.

As we have heard in the thematic exchange, verification and compliance is a timely and crucial topic, and it behooves the Committee to address it in a substantive fashion. This resolution moves us into a further phase of consideration of the subject of verification and the role of the United Nations, proceeding at a measured pace and building on earlier inputs. It involves the general exchange of views last year and this in the Committee, formal solicitation of the views of Members in 2005 and convening a panel of experts in 2006.

We believe that this approach provides ample opportunity for all to express their views and to benefit from expert opinions on options for enhancing verification capabilities — which Committee members can assess at the Assembly's sixty-first session — in deciding how to proceed. We will be continuing consultations with sponsors and interested delegations, and look forward to garnering wide support for the resolution, which remains open for co-sponsorship.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Malaysia, who will present a number of draft resolutions on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Mr. Rastam (Malaysia): I have the honour to introduce six draft resolutions on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), as our contribution to the multilateral disarmament process. In the interests of maintaining the efficiency of our work, which you have so ably steered us through, Mr. Chairman, I shall be as brief as possible.

First, I would like to introduce a draft resolution, under agenda item 65 (e), entitled "Relationship between disarmament and development", which is contained in document A/C.1/59/L.28. The symbiotic relationship between disarmament and development and the important role of security in that connection cannot be denied. NAM is concerned at increasing global military expenditures — funds that could otherwise be spent on development, poverty eradication and the elimination of diseases, especially in developing countries. NAM therefore believes that States should consider allocating part of their resources made available by the implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements to economic and social development. In that connection, NAM welcomes the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on the relationship between disarmament and development (A/59/119) and its reappraisal of that significant issue in the current international context.

The second draft resolution that I wish to introduce, under agenda item 65 (k), is entitled "Improving the effectiveness of the methods of work of the First Committee" and is contained in document A/C.1/59/L.13. This draft resolution is submitted by NAM in the spirit of General Assembly resolutions 58/41, 58/126 and 58/316, as well in our recognition of the importance of enhancing the effectiveness, role and working methods of the First Committee. NAM seeks to offer its views on that important question through this draft resolution. We believe that improving the functioning of the Committee is an ongoing process that should be considered in an integrated and comprehensive manner through the existing three stages of the Committee's work. NAM believes that the measures proposed in the draft resolution could contribute towards improving the Committee's functioning and its role in promoting peace and security.

I should like to inform the Committee, however, that we are continuing with informal consultations with all delegations with a view to agreeing on a consensus text. I refer to the statement made earlier by the representative of the United States. I share his view that it is important that wider consultations be carried out to ensure that we can agree on a consensus text on this very important question.

The third draft resolution I am introducing, under agenda item 65 (n), is contained in document A/C.1/59/L.11 of 12 October 2004 and is entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation". The Non-Aligned Movement believes strongly in multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, as the only sustainable way of addressing disarmament and international security issues. We believe that it is critical for the General Assembly to adopt such a resolution to reflect our continued conviction of the role of the United Nations in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. The draft resolution embodies the desire of the international community for multilateral cooperation in this area. We believe that much is at

stake, including the danger that existing international disarmament treaties could unravel.

The fourth draft resolution, under agenda item 65 (o), is A/C.1/59/L.10, entitled "Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control". NAM considers this question to be an important item on the Committee's agenda. Ensuring the continued sustainability of the global environment is an issue of the utmost importance, especially for succeeding generations. We should collectively endeavour to ensure that necessary measures are taken to preserve and protect the environment, especially in the formulation and implementation of agreements concerning disarmament and arms control.

The fifth draft resolution that we wish to introduce, under agenda item 65 (dd), is A/C.1/59/L.14, which is entitled "Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament". As a result of open-ended informal consultations, and for the sake of clarity, NAM has made a minor correction to paragraph 2 by inserting the phrase "in 2006" after "its substantive sessions". I believe that the Committee can accept that text, as orally corrected.

For the information of the Committee, following consultations with the Secretariat concerning the date for convening the Open-ended Working Group on the fourth special session of the General Assembly (SSOD-IV), there will be one meeting of the organizational session in January 2006 and three substantives sessions consisting of 15 meetings. The substantive sessions will be convened in spring 2006, between March and June. The report of the Open-ended Working Group on SSOD-IV will be submitted prior to the conclusion of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly — at the latest in August 2006.

I should like to add that the draft resolution follows on resolution 58/521, on the same subject, which was adopted by consensus both in this Committee and in the General Assembly.

Finally, I would like to introduce a draft resolution entitled "United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament", under agenda item 66 (f), which is contained in document A/C.1/59/L.9. The United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament have, in our view, been instrumental in promoting understanding and cooperation among States in their respective regions in the fields of peace, disarmament and development. We hope that the regional centres will continue to receive support — especially from Member States — with a view to enabling them to strengthen, improve and implement their activities and programmes. I should like also to add that the draft resolution follows on resolution 58/63, on the same subject. We hope that the current draft resolution will receive similar support from the members of this Committee, as well as the General Assembly.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the Non-Aligned Movement hopes that all delegations will be able to join us in extending their support to the six draft resolutions that my delegation has just tabled. We wish to thank all delegations that have engaged in consultations on these draft resolution with NAM.

Mr. Wolter (Germany): I wish simply to follow the appeal of the Ambassador of India regarding the very important draft resolution on measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. Germany is pleased to announce that we will be co-sponsoring that draft resolution.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): We now will embark on our last segment, on matters related to international disarmament and security, including education for disarmament and non-proliferation.

Ms. DeSutter (United States of America): I am pleased to see a colleague from our important friend and neighbour to the south presiding over the Committee. I would like to thank you, Sir, and this body for the opportunity to share United States views on verification, compliance and compliance enforcement.

Given the time of day, I will abbreviate my remarks somewhat, and I understand that the full text of my statement will be made available.

Verification, compliance and enforcement are closely related. Together they are keys to our collective ability to achieve the security benefits we seek from arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament agreements.

Unfortunately, however, these elements — and the relationships among them — are not always well understood. Today I would like to share with the Committee some of our thinking about the importance of these elements and the ways in which they interact.

Verification, compliance assessment and compliance enforcement are the three components of a policy process wherein information about a State's actions is weighed against its obligations and commitments, and, if it is determined that the State is not fulfilling its obligations and commitments, steps are identified and taken to induce or enforce compliance.

The first step of this process is to assess the extent to which an agreement can actually be verified. This step is undertaken in the United States before we enter into negotiations for a new agreement, during its negotiation as changes to the agreement are considered, and after an agreement is concluded. The second step in this process is an assessment of the non-compliance of parties to the agreement, once the agreement has entered into force. The final step is compliance enforcement: the determination of what can or must be done to bring a party that is judged to have violated its obligations back into compliance or otherwise respond to that party's non-compliance.

Many consider these factors — verification, compliance, and enforcement — as separate and separable activities. However, as with a three-legged stool, one or two legs are not enough; they are interdependent.

There has been much discussion in many international forums about whether or not certain nations have violated their international obligations. There has been less discussion of the process by which nations reach their compliance judgments, and the methodologies they employ. But, if we are to understand each other and work together to retain the benefits of our agreements, it is important that we understand the process by which each of us reaches the conclusions that we have on compliance.

Initial indications for the United States of a potential problem of non-compliance can come from a broad array of information, including an intelligence report, information from an international organization, or even revelations of a private citizen that flag an activity of concern. While all information, whatever its source, warrants evaluation, information that can be independently confirmed is considered to be the strongest information, especially when it can be confirmed from multiple sources.

When information available to us suggests that there may be a compliance question, one of the first steps we take is to look at the international agreement or other commitment in question to see what States parties are obliged to do.

International agreements and other commitments are made up of words, and it is always important — and sometimes decisive — clearly to establish what the precise obligation is in the case under review. While the review of obligations and commitments is under way, we seek all possible additional information regarding the activities of concern. Multiple sources of information are especially important if the matter is grave.

Ultimately, we weigh the best available evidence regarding the actions and activities of the country in question against our understanding of that country's obligations to form our compliance assessments, and finally we reach a finding. In cases where the information is not sufficient to reach a firm finding of violation, we will "caveat" it by explicitly noting uncertainties or ambiguities in the evidence. Whenever we can, we distinguish between inadvertent violations and deliberate ones, because that distinction can have an important bearing on what action will need to be taken in order to rectify the problem. We also endeavour to communicate the degree of seriousness of a violation and to identify the steps that might be needed to bring the party back into compliance, or to respond in other ways that satisfy the concern.

Let me underscore that making a determination as to when another State is in violation with its international obligations is not an easy matter. The process for us is time-consuming, rigorous and systematic. However, as a State party to arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament agreements and commitments, we rest our safety and security in part upon other countries' compliance with those agreements and commitments. Therefore, the compliance assessment process is, for us, a necessary early warning call to action.

The compliance process that I have just described not only informs our judgment as to whether we are facing non-compliance that requires a response; it also informs our judgment as to whether future treaties are effectively verifiable.

Determining the extent to which an agreement can be verified necessarily involves a number of variables, both technical and contextual, that vary from one proposed agreement to the next, and which

sometimes hinge upon specific nuances of phrasing or the nature of the constrained activities.

I am often asked if the United States demands "perfect" verification. The answer is, of course, no. There is no such thing as perfect verification. The term "effectively verifiable" does not, and should not be taken, to mean that there is, or can ever be, certainty that a future violation will be detected. This phrase indicates, however, that the aspiration is to achieve reasonable confidence — under the circumstances — that detection of non-compliance will occur in time for appropriate responses to be undertaken.

The United States considers an arrangement or treaty to be effectively verifiable if the degree of verifiability is judged to be sufficient given the compliance history of the parties involved, the risks associated with non-compliance, the difficulty of response to deny violators the benefits of their violations, the language and measures incorporated into the agreement and our own national means and methods of verification.

International organizations and mechanisms can provide useful and essential input to nations for their consideration in making these assessments. They can also provide useful forums for sharing other information, for sharing judgments and for deliberating response options. But international organizations are not parties to agreements. States are parties to agreements.

It is a common misperception that a combination of international data declarations, international cooperative measures — including technical measures — and on-site inspection regimes all by themselves will be sufficient for detecting non-compliance. In fact, data declarations, cooperative measures and on-site inspections can provide useful and often invaluable information. They are useful tools for investigating indications of non-compliance — as we have seen the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) do to great effect in Iran, for example — and they are useful tools for detecting inadvertent violations. However, inspections provide information according to agreed access and collection capabilities negotiated by the parties, and only provide such information as is available at the specific time and place of the inspection. Even cooperative measures, such as remote cameras and seals for continuous monitoring, while quite powerful, are limited to the locations where they are employed.

Some agreements provide for challenge or suspect site inspections in an effort to address these challenges. However, the inspectors still must know where to look, and — if they find the right place to look — there must be some means of determining whether the activities at that location are permitted or prohibited. On-site measures that cannot make a significant contribution to verification may only build a false sense of security.

To increase the likelihood that non-compliance — especially undeclared activities at undeclared locations — will be detected, one must be able to draw on all sources of information, both national and international. National means and methods of verification are thus necessarily a critical part of every approach to verification.

If arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament agreements and commitments are to support the security of all nations, all nations must respond when confronted with non-compliance. Unilateral United States action to encourage compliance is not enough. Detecting a violation is not an end in itself; it is a call to action. Without strict compliance and without the concerted action of all parties to insist upon strict compliance — and to hold violators accountable for their actions — the national security of all nations will erode and global stability will be undermined.

In conclusion, I would like once again to thank the Committee for the opportunity to share our perspectives on the role of verification, compliance and compliance enforcement. These principles underlie our approach to a range of vital issues that affect international peace and security, and I am pleased to have been able to outline them for the Committee. I look forward to discussing them further with all parties with a view to developing and improving our collective effectiveness in meeting verification and compliance challenges. We have much work to do together.

Mr. Opgenorth (Canada): First of all, I would like to say that Canada is very pleased to co-sponsor draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.53, introduced by Mexico, entitled "United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education". The draft resolution affirms that the need for education and outreach in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation has never

been greater, and recognizes the importance of the United Nations, civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) in the pursuit of this goal.

Canada has long recognized and supported the active engagement of civil society and non-governmental organizations in the promotion of our shared non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament objectives. The Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs holds consultations annually with civil society to address topical non-proliferation and disarmament issues. We have introduced the practice of including representatives of civil society in our delegations to meetings of the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Canada provides funding to NGOs to convene expert-level consultations, and supports the efforts of Reaching Critical Will to ensure wide public access to national statements and other documents emanating from meetings of United Nations disarmament bodies.

The international security research and outreach programme of Foreign Affairs Canada constitutes a focal point for original research and assessment relevant to international security issues, including non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament, verification and confidence-building measures. The programme draws together in-house capacity, resources from other Government departments and a network of expertise from the academic community and knowledgeable individuals in Canada and abroad.

Canada also supports independent graduate-level research through several doctoral and masters-level research awards, offered in collaboration with the Simons Centre for Peace and Disarmament Studies at the University of British Columbia. The primary objective of these awards is to enhance Canadian graduate level scholarship on disarmament and non-proliferation issues. This signals the importance we attach the development of centres of excellence in this area.

Most recently, in partnership with the United Nations Association in Canada, my Government has sponsored the production of an education module intended for students and teachers at the secondary-school level. This project will be launched at Canadian high schools this year and will do much to promote close collaboration between disarmament experts and civil society, including young students, educators and academic institutions.

Mr. Mine (Japan): Sixty years ago, it took only a single, relatively primitive, atomic bomb to wreak devastation on an entire city. Nowadays, nuclear power is capable of far surpassing past tragedies and destruction, resulting in a far greater loss of life. Furthermore, with the emergence of terrorism and the potential use of nuclear weapons by terrorists, the urgency of increasing awareness of the real dangers posed by nuclear weapons has never been greater.

For this reason, Japan places the utmost importance on disarmament and non-proliferation education. It is through such education that people gain a better understanding of the inhumane nature of such weapons and acquire the knowledge and skills to make contributions to the achievement of concrete disarmament and non-proliferation measures. Education is an important yet under-utilized tool for strengthening disarmament and non-proliferation for future generations. It encourages critical thinking and attitudinal change so that the next generation can choose a culture of peace over violence and war.

It is encouraging to learn that various efforts have been made to date, both nationally and around the world, to raise public awareness of the dangers of such weapons, as well as of the need to further strengthen disarmament and non-proliferation measures. I am pleased to note that some useful activities have been taking place here in the United Nations in the margins of the First Committee during this session to share experiences in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation education among Member States, international organizations, the Department for Disarmament Affairs and civil society.

The educational material used in one of these activities in particular caught my attention. It focuses on issues relating to the historical experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, including early post-war transcripts, visual documentation and artefacts from those atomic-bombed cities, as well as new teaching methodologies to help young people understand the nuclear legacy that we bequeath to them. Such opportunities can help us face the realities of history and give us hope that we can learn our lessons well.

Japan, for its part, has been making various efforts in this field. I would like to update the Committee on some of our recent efforts.

First, under the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Programme, Japan has been inviting

various Government officials to visit Japan each year since 1983. There have been about 500 participants to date. This year's participants — who have been with us here during the First Committee session — recently completed their visit to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which I hope helped to provide an insight into the reality of the atomic bombings.

Secondly, in July of this year, in the margins of the United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, held in Sapporo, Japan, a seminar on disarmament education was held with the participation of experts, teachers from local cities and members of international organizations and civil society, providing an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation education among local educators.

Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been making various efforts to disseminate materials on its disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. An English version of Japan's disarmament and non-proliferation policy for this year has just been published, and copies are available just outside this Conference Room.

Fourthly, Japan has also become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.53, submitted to the First Committee by Mexico, entitled "United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education". Japan very much appreciates Mexico's initiative in this field.

Mr. Bonavia (Malta): Mr. Chairman, since I am taking the floor for the first time in this forum, allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to join others who have spoken before me in congratulating you on your assumption of the role of Chairman of the First Committee. My delegation seizes this opportunity to commend you for the manner in which you have conducted the proceedings of this Committee to date.

The First Committee is the platform in the annual session of the General Assembly in which all Member States are given the opportunity to discuss not only matters related to global disarmament but also urgent and pressing issues concerning international security, most particularly regional ones — which, needless to say, also involve the Mediterranean region.

The Mediterranean region epitomizes many of the thorny and multifaceted problems related to socio-economic and political instability. Since our independence in 1964, Malta has striven hard to take a proactive role in the endeavour to promote security and cooperation in that region. It was at Malta's insistence that in 1974 the then Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, in Helsinki, formally affirmed the inextricable link that exists between the Mediterranean and European security. Malta was then a neighbour bordering the European Community, seeking to place those problems firmly at the centre of the European Community's attention. It took well over two decades to witness a tangible manifestation of this principle with the creation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership in 1995.

Malta is a firm believer in the initiatives and processes of inclusion that various organizations and institutions have set in motion in order to bridge the divide within this strategically divided area. Throughout the years, our active participation in and support of diverse Mediterranean institutions and initiatives — namely, the Mediterranean Action Plan, the MED Forum, the "5 + 5" process, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies — have been unflinching. We owe it to ourselves and to our neighbours to continue our quest for regional cooperation in this turbulent and volatile region. We will continue to give our due contribution to all regional forums and initiatives so as to strengthen cooperation and security in the Mediterranean region.

Foremost among those initiatives is the attempt to provide a comprehensive approach to the region through the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership — better known as the Barcelona process — launched in 1995, when the foreign ministers of European Union (EU) member States and 12 Mediterranean countries met in Barcelona to draw up a declaration that established

> "a comprehensive partnership among the participants ... through strengthened political dialogue on a regular basis, the development of economic and financial cooperation and greater emphasis on the social, cultural and human dimension, these being the three aspects of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership".

Malta believes that the Euro-Mediterranean Process is making an important contribution, and addressing the resolve, reducing the ever-widening economic and social gap, which for many years has been one of the destabilizing factors of the Mediterranean region. As a member of the EU, Malta

strongly supports this initiative, which offers new and innovative opportunities to reinforce the much-needed cooperation and collaboration between and among all Mediterranean States.

To a certain extent, this process has moved in the right direction. However, this has not been at the rhythm that was anticipated at the beginning. That could well be attributed to the troubled situation in the Middle East, with the problem of Palestine at its core, which unfortunately, has hampered the process. The tragic situation in that region remains one of the primary concerns of my Government, as highlighted by my Prime Minister in his statement to the General Assembly this year:

> "Malta looks at the problem both from its tragic humanitarian dimension as well as from its far-reaching implications for peace and security. One important concern for us in that regard is the impact that the problem has on issues of peace and security in the Middle East in general and the Mediterranean area in particular." (*A/59/PV.8, page 16*)

In this regard, we feel that one must pursue every possible avenue to ensure that when the slightest possibility for a peaceful solution emerges, the parties and the international community at large will grasp the opportunity and spare no effort to guarantee a peaceful resolution to the long-standing problem of Palestine. We again call upon Israel and the Palestinian Authority to resolve their differences in a peaceful and just manner. As an EU member State, Malta considers itself to be a party to the Quartet and, therefore, committed to fully support the Middle East road map and any other initiative that leads to the peaceful resolution of the problem on the basis of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side within secure and recognized borders. We believe that only through constructive dialogue can an agreement between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority be reached, thus ensuring a just and lasting peace for all the peoples of the region.

My Government wholeheartedly welcomes the recent EU strategic partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East, which was formalized pursuant to intensive consultations at the European Council in June 2004. The objective of this strategic partnership is to promote the development of a common zone of peace, prosperity and progress in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. It sets out a concrete policy agenda under which, through partnership, dialogue and recognizing diversities, the Union will seek to promote political reform, good governance, democracy and human rights; secondly, to stimulate trade and economic cooperation, economic liberalization and people-to-people contacts; and thirdly, to promote conflict prevention and resolution in the Mediterranean and the Middle East as well as measures to combat terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and illegal immigration. In this spirit, Malta considers that to an important extent this strategy is intertwined with the EU's Mediterranean strategy.

Malta also warmly welcomes Libya's decision to eliminate all material, equipment and programmes that lead to the production of weapons of mass destruction. We commend Libya's ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and its signature of and decision to implement the Additional Protocol. We urge Libya to continue its good cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in implementing its decision. Libya's decision to play its rightful role in the international community is most certainly a further positive step that will contribute to peace, security and stability in the Mediterranean region. These positive developments are of great significance to the future of the Mediterranean. The active participation of Libya in the Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean Process would be particularly welcome in this connection.

Moreover, my Government attaches great importance to the development and strengthening wherever possible, of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, based on arrangements freely arrived at among States of the region. Needless to say, such zones enhance global and regional peace and security and promote nuclear disarmament, stability and confidence. We emphasize the importance of the concept of zones free of weapons of mass destruction, indeed both nuclear and other, and their means of delivery. With the ultimate goal of strengthening peace and security in the Mediterranean region by way of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East, we strongly urge all States in that area to establish an effectively verifiable zone free of nuclear weapons, as well as other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

Let me conclude by underscoring that as a member of the European Union Malta will remain deeply committed to maintaining its role as a proactive force for peace, stability and prosperity in all the relevant forums and will earnestly seek to ensure that Mediterranean issues are always given the importance they deserve on the agenda of the EU and other international organizations. Malta's accession to the EU will complement our deep and sustained engagement with Mediterranean issues and add further texture and depth to the Union's knowledge and appreciation of the region's intricate politics and sensitivities.

Mr. Lew Kwang-chul (Republic of Korea): I would like to touch briefly on the issue of missiles. The proliferation of missiles in general, and of ballistic missiles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction in particular, constitutes one of the most serious and complex international security challenges today.

Despite various efforts of the international community to address the problems related to missiles, there is as yet no instrument to deal with this issue at the global level. In our view that is particularly because a State held divergent views on missiles, based on its own national and regional security needs. Thus, it will be extremely difficult to build a comprehensive and universal instrument covering all types of missiles and aspects of missile-related activities. However, we note that as a result of continuous efforts on the part of the international community, particularly in recent years, some progress has been made in this field.

The Republic of Korea fully supports the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. We are of the view that the Hague Code of Conduct can serve as a global non-proliferation norm-building initiative by promoting responsible behaviour of States in the field of ballistic missiles. Through its transparency and confidence-building measures, we believe that the Hague Code of Conduct will be able to complement and reinforce other measures already existing at the national, regional and multilateral levels.

We also support Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which addresses serious concerns about the danger of non-State actors gaining access not only to weapons of mass destruction but also to their means of delivery. While we recognize that the nexus between terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has become one of the most pressing security concerns facing the international community today, we are of the view that a level of consideration no less serious should be given to the danger of missiles falling into the wrong hands.

We welcome the various initiatives to reduce the uncontrolled spread of man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS). In that regard, we welcome the expansion of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms to include MANPADS as a subcategory under the existing category of missiles and missile-launchers. We also welcome the valuable discussions that have taken place within the framework of the Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies, the G-8, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum to reduce the danger posed by MANPADS.

The vital role of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) in curbing missile proliferation through export control cannot be underestimated. We are pleased to report that the plenary meetings of MTCR, held in Seoul earlier this month, were successful. As the current Chair of the MTCR, we will continue to do our utmost to promote its cause.

Lastly, we regret that the second United Nations Panel of Governmental Experts on Missiles in All Their Aspects failed to adopt a substantive report this year. However, we note that the discussion itself was useful, as it covered a variety of aspects of missile-related problems in great depth and in full detail.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): We have exhausted the list of speakers for this afternoon. However, in view of the short time we have left, I would like to suggest that we continue with the informal interactive dialogue, with the support of Ambassador Rivas of Colombia, next Monday, rather than right now. All the more since I must now read out some information related to the voting process, and in any case, if we can save even 5 or 10 minutes now I think we will have gained thereby.

Returning to the information that I think it is important for the Committee to know, I note that next week we will begin the third and final phase of our work with the adoption of decisions on all the draft resolutions and decisions before us related to agenda

items 57 to 72. In that regard, I would like to draw attention to document A/C.1/59/CRP.3, in which the draft resolutions are clustered thematically and which has been previously circulated to all delegations.

On Tuesday, 26 October, the Committee will begin its work by taking action on the draft resolutions in cluster one, namely, nuclear weapons. With the cooperation of all the members of the Committee and in accordance with past practice and precedent, I intend to proceed as efficiently as possible from one cluster to another as decisions are taken on each. Nevertheless, while following that procedure, the Committee will maintain a certain degree of flexibility.

It is also my intention to follow last year's precedent in proceeding with voting on draft resolutions. Consequently, during the decision-making stage on each thematic cluster delegations will first have an opportunity to introduce revised draft resolutions relating to that cluster. Next, delegations that so wish may make statements or general comments other than explanations of vote. Finally, delegations may speak in explanation of vote on the thematic clusters under consideration. Thereafter, once the Committee has heard those statements of a general nature, as well as the explanations of vote before the vote on an entire thematic cluster, we will proceed to take action on all the draft resolutions successively and without interruption. In other words, delegations can explain in one single statement their position or their vote on all the draft resolutions related to a single thematic cluster on which decisions are being taken.

It is my intention, with the assistance and cooperation of all members, to follow this procedure strictly in order to make the most of the time and resources allocated to the Committee. I am sure that the members of the Committee will fully concur with me in that respect. Therefore, I appeal to all delegations to kindly observe that procedure and to avoid any interruptions once voting on a given thematic cluster of draft resolutions has begun.

Once the Committee has taken a decision on all the draft resolutions and decisions related to a given cluster, those delegations wishing to explain their positions or votes after the vote may do so. However, as in the case of explanations of vote before the vote, they should do so in a single statement and only after we have voted on all the proposals on that cluster.

I would also like to stress that, in accordance with the rules of procedure, countries presenting or sponsoring draft resolutions are not permitted to make any statements or explanations of vote either before or after the voting. Nevertheless, they can make statements of a general nature on any thematic cluster at the beginning of the meeting. However, I would like to discourage the exercise of that right as much as possible, since general comments quite often become a repetition of the general debate, and I would therefore urge delegations to make use of that possibility only when absolutely necessary. I refer particularly to countries that have co-sponsored draft resolutions that are going to be or have already been presented or introduced in the meetings this week.

To avoid any misunderstandings or — perhaps more accurately — simply in order to better organize our work, I would strongly urge delegations that wish to have a recorded vote on a particular draft resolution to kindly inform the Committee secretariat as soon as possible and, in any case, before the Committee begins to vote in the meeting in which the draft resolution concerned is to be considered.

Finally, with respect to the postponement or delay of action on any draft resolution, I would also urge all delegations to inform the Committee secretariat as soon as possible, preferably at least one day before action on the draft resolution in question is scheduled, so that we can better programme and schedule our meetings.

With the Committee's permission, I intend to follow the procedure outlined. I do not think we are innovating here. It is a procedure that worked well at the fifty-eighth session, and therefore I think there will not be any difficulties with it for the Committee.

I would also like to remind the Committee that on Monday, 25 October — in addition to finishing with both the interactive dialogue and the introduction of resolutions on other matters related to disarmament and international security, including disarmament and non-proliferation education — I hope to engage in an informal dialogue with all delegations in this same room, making use of conference services, in order to continue our discussions on the question of reform and revitalization of the First Committee. I hope, therefore, as we had anticipated at this meeting, that delegations sponsoring draft resolutions A/C.1/59/L.1 and L.13 will be in a position to report substantial progress. For

my part, I trust that I will also have some concrete suggestions on the programme of work for the sixtieth session so that we can begin consideration of that document.

Before closing, the representative of Nigeria has requested to speak. I give the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mr. Udedibia (Nigeria): Mr. Chairman, may I apologize for taking the floor at this time. I simply to seek a clarification or confirmation that delegations that wish to introduce resolutions on Monday will still be able to do so.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): Yes. I thank the representative of Nigeria for his question; I think it is very important. Monday, during the formal meeting delegations can introduce any remaining draft resolutions without restrictions. As soon as we conclude the interactive dialogue with Ambassador Rivas, we will proceed to the introduction of draft resolutions.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.